

12-2015

Another year over

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Recommended Citation

Jan, R, & Teijlingen, E. Another year over Journal of Asian Midwives. 2015;2(2):1.

Another year over

Welcome to the last issue of 2015. It has been another eventful year in South Asia in general and in midwifery and maternity care in particular. Nepal experienced the impact of a major earthquake with aftershocks in the spring. We saw a very responsive MIDSON (Midwifery Society of Nepal) offering Humanitarian Reproductive Health Outreach Clinics in several earthquake-affected areas. Meanwhile Afghanistan reported a major improvement in its maternal mortality statistics. In 2002, 1,600 women died for every 100,000 live births. In 2010, a US-funded study found that the maternal mortality rate had dropped to 327 per 100,000 live births. This reported improvement has been challenged by maternal health experts. *The New York Times* reporting on the issue quoted Bournemouth University's Rachel Arnold as saying "The reported mortality ratio is too good to be true." Rachel is a British midwife who recently completed her doctorate in maternal care. She has worked in Afghanistan frequently over the past 17 years, training Afghan midwives and traditional birth attendants. She added: "I wish it were true, but I can't believe that it is true." [1].

This year three midwifery meetings took place: the first one in Bangkok, the second in Bangladesh and the third in Indonesia. In Bangkok participants from Asian countries decided that the South Asian Midwives Alliance (SAMA) should be expanded to cover more than South Asia, therefore the new name of the alliance, Midwives Alliance of Asia (MAA) was accepted. The MAA board was formed and its constitution has been approved. The strategic priorities were deliberated in Indonesia and the MAA was pre-launched at the ICM Asian Pacific Conference in Japan. The MAA website will be launched next year.

The end of the year is also reminder to us to thank all who have supported *The Journal of Asian Midwives*, our authors, the reviewers, the library staff at the Aga Khan University, and, of course, our readers. We particularly like to thank Ms. Kiran Mubeen and Ms. Mehtab Jaffer for their constant commitment and hard work in the editorial office and Mr. Cameron van Teijlingen for proof-reading several recent contributions to the journal. Our special thanks to Mr. Khawaja Mustafa, Librarian, the Aga Khan University, for his continuous assistance and advice for JAM.

Finally, we wish all friends of *The Journal of Asian Midwives* a Happy, Healthy & Peaceful 2016!

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1. Nordland. R. 'Reported Gains in Afghan Maternal Health Are Found to Be Implausible'. *The New York Times*, Dec 4th, 2015. Available from: <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/05/world/asia/afghanistan-maternal-mortality-rate.html>